

Marin County Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan

Fact Sheet

The Plan	Increase Marin County's sales tax by 1/2-cent to raise \$16.5 million per year for bus service within Marin, to complete the Highway 101 carpool lane through San Rafael, for roadway improvements, and for safe routes to schools to reduce traffic congestion. The plan raises \$331 million over 20 years	
Goal of The Plan	The plan's goal is to improve traffic for all Marin County residents and workers by providing a variety of high quality transportation options designed to meet flexible local needs. It allows Marin to control its transportation future.	
How the Plan Was Drafted to Address Competing Needs	<p>Hundreds of Marin residents, including elected officials and planners, have met and participated in public forums over the past four years to decide the best way to address Marin's transportation needs. The process was conducted by a Joint Committee of the Board of Supervisors, Marin County Congestion Management Agency, and Marin County Transit District, which includes representation from each city and town in Marin. In 2003, participants created a "Transportation Vision" that outlined \$1.6 billion in desired projects, and noted that a source of local funding is the necessary first step to address the most immediate needs. A 1/2-cent sales tax is the most feasible option available.</p> <p>Citizens' Advisory Committees in each part of the County, representing the many diverse interests in Marin County, provided input that resulted in a draft Expenditure Plan earlier this year. The draft plan was presented to each of Marin's City/Town Councils and to numerous stakeholder groups. Their comments prompted refinements reflected in the Transportation Sales Tax Expenditure Plan.</p>	
What the Plan Provides	<p>There are four key strategies to reducing congestion and improving transportation in Marin. The draft expenditure plan addresses them all:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a local bus system that serves community needs including special transit for seniors. \$XX million• Ensure timely completion of the Highway 101 Carpool Lane Gap Closure Project through San Rafael despite the loss of State funding. XX million• Improve and maintain Marin's local transportation infrastructure, including roads, bikeways and sidewalks. XX million• Improve school access and reduce school-related congestion. XX million	

Details of the draft expenditure plan are available at www.marintraffic.org.

**Facts About
Marin Traffic
and
Transportation**

Traffic is always cited as Marin's biggest problem. Some facts:

- 79% of all trips made by Marin residents are within the county.
- 70% of all Marin trips are made by people driving alone.
- 62% of Marin workers live in Marin.
- 21% of morning congestion comes from school traffic.
- Because of State funding cuts, the Highway 101 car pool lane project through San Rafael will not be finished until 2015 without new financing.
- Demand for special transit for seniors increased 27% over the past 5 years.
- Most other Bay Area counties already have a transportation sales tax, and Marin's sales tax is the lowest in the Bay Area.
- A local sales tax would qualify Marin as a "self-help" county, allowing us to provide local matching funds and compete for federal and state grants, which will multiply the impact of the tax dollars.

Accountability

The sales tax expenditure plan will be managed by the Marin County Transportation Authority. Its 16-member board will consist of the Board of Supervisors and a council member from each incorporated city/town. The Authority will be accountable to a 12-member Citizens Oversight Committee, created with the assistance of the League of Women Voters. The committee will review all expenditures and report annually to the public. Salaries and benefits for the Authority's staff will not exceed 1% of funds collected.

**What's Not
Included**

There is no funding in the plan to create a rail system, to purchase open space, or to subsidize ferry service, as earlier transportation measures proposed.

**Making Tax
Dollars Work**

State funding earmarked for transportation is being diverted to other programs by the Legislature. In addition, funding for local transit services is insufficient to meet even the reduced service levels implemented in November 2003. Local funding and local control are the answer. Local funding also opens new opportunities to receive State and Federal grants that requires a local share.

The sales tax is the approach provided to counties by the State Legislature to fund local transportation projects. A gasoline tax would need to be 14 cents per gallon to raise as much as a 1/2-cent sales tax. Also, by statute, a county agency cannot raise either the gas tax or the real estate tax on its own.

What's Next

Each City/Town Council will be asked to approve the final expenditure plan. If approved by a majority of the cities/towns representing a majority of the incorporated population, Authority will decide this summer whether to go forward with a ballot measure on the November ballot. The measure will need 2/3-voter approval and will go into effect April 1, 2005.